



## **Bureau of Land Management**

Boise District Office  
Bruneau Field Office  
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Boise, ID 83705  
<http://www.id.blm.gov>

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### **Determination of Land Use Plan Conformance and NEPA Adequacy (DNA)**

U.S. Department of the Interior - Bureau of Land Management

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#### **A. BLM Office:** Bruneau Field Office, Boise District Idaho

**NEPA Log Number:** DOI-BLM-ID-B020-2012-0012-DNA

**Lease/Serial Case File No.:** G5SF

**Proposed Action Title/Type:** Mustang (G5SF) ESR Plan

**Location/Legal of Proposed Action:** T47N. R55E., T47N. R56E., various sections

**Applicant (if any):**

#### **Description of the Proposed Action and any applicable mitigation measures:**

***Aerial Seeding*** - Two seed mixes, 1) mountain big sagebrush and Sherman's big bluegrass and 2) low sagebrush, would be aurally broadcast seeded across the burned area during late fall or winter of 2012/2013. The mountain big sagebrush mix would be applied onto smaller areas of deeper soils found most often at the toeslope of hills. Seed would be broadcast using an end product contract by either a helicopter or fixed-wing aircraft.

***Fence Repair/Construction*** - Approximately 4 miles of allotment/pasture boundary fence damaged or destroyed by the fire would be repaired and 3 miles of new temporary protective fence would be constructed to protect seeded areas while allowing livestock grazing on the unburned portions of the grazing allotments. Damaged wood corners and braces would be replaced with galvanized steel posts. Damaged wire would also be repaired. The protective fence would be a let down design constructed to BLM fence standards for wildlife with wildlife markers.

***Grazing Allotment Closure*** - The southern half of the Last Chance pasture of the Alzola grazing allotment would be closed to livestock grazing for 2 growing seasons or until objectives to resume grazing are met. Livestock closure would be achieved with 4 miles of existing fence repair, 3 miles of new temporary protective fence, and a grazing decision to temporarily close the southern portion of the Last Chance pasture. Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) owns the base property to which the grazing preference for Scott Table

allotment is attached. At present, they do not have a lessee for the base property and, consequently, BLM has not issued a grazing permit for Scott Table.

**Noxious Weeds** – Whitetop, black henbane, Canada thistle, cheatgrass, and ventenata grass are known to occur within and adjacent to the burned area boundary. Noxious weed inventory and spot herbicide treatment would occur for three years following the fire within the burned area. Weeds would be treated with the BLM-approved chemicals in accordance with the Noxious Weed EA and the Record of Decision for Vegetation Treatments Using Herbicides on Bureau of Land Management Lands in 17 Western States, approved September 29, 2007 (Vegetation Treatment EIS). Appendix B of the Record of Decision includes a list of standard operating procedures that would be used for vegetation treatments using herbicides.

**B. Conformance with the Land Use Plan (LUP) and Consistency with Related Subordinate Implementation Plans**

LUP/Document <sup>1</sup>	Sections/Pages	Date Approved
Bruneau Management Framework Plan (MFP)		May 1983
Boise District Normal Fire Rehabilitation Plan		2004

<sup>1</sup>List applicable LUPs (e.g., Resource Management Plans, Management Framework Plans, or applicable amendments) and activity, project, management, water quality restoration, or program plans.

The proposed action is in conformance with the LUP, even though it is not specifically provided for, because it is clearly consistent with the following LUP decisions (objectives, terms, and conditions):

These proposed actions meet the MFP objectives to:

- Manage 520,000 acres of sage-grouse range in the BPU to improve nesting, brood rearing, and winter habitats by: improving all poor and fair big sagebrush, meadow, and riparian ecological sites to good ecological condition (WL-4.4);
- Maintain and/or enhance unique or special habitats to retain and/or improve their character and value for wildlife, research, and human enjoyment. Protect habitats supporting nongame wildlife with high public and/or biological interest (WL-5);
- Maintain stability of 408,300 acres classified as moderate, high, and critical erosion hazard by reducing or minimizing wind and water erosion (WS-1);
- Manage sensitive species habitat in the BPU to maintain or increase existing and potential populations (WL-2);
- Manage 1,079,000 acres of pronghorn habitat in the BPU, within IMP guidelines where applicable, to provide sufficient forage, water, cover, and space (WL-3.3);
- Manage mule deer spring, summer, and fall, and winter range, and pronghorn habitat in the BPU to obtain good ecological condition, and to provide adequate food, cover, and

water (WL-3.1, 3.2, 3.3).

The proposed treatments in the ES and ER plans conform to the 1983 Bruneau MFP. The interdisciplinary team developed objectives and treatments which respond to the identified issues and concerns. The BLM would evaluate the plans based on the success or failure in meeting these objectives.

**C. Identify applicable NEPA documents and other related documents that cover the Proposed Action. List by name and date other documentation relevant to the proposed action (e.g., biological assessment, biological opinion, watershed assessment, allotment evaluation, and monitoring report).**

<b>NEPA/Other Related Documents</b>	<b>Sections/Pages</b>	<b>Date Approved</b>
Vegetation Treatments Using Herbicides on BLM Lands in 17 Western States Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) and the Vegetation Treatments on BLM Lands in 17 Western States Programmatic Environmental Report	All	June, 2007
Boise District Noxious and invasive Weed Treatment EA	All	Feb 6, 2007
Idaho's Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management	All	August 1997

**D. NEPA Adequacy Criteria**

- 1. Is the new proposed action a feature of, or essentially similar to, an alternative analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s)? Is the project within the same analysis area, or if the project location is different, are the geographic and resource conditions sufficiently similar to those analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s)? If there are differences, can you explain why they are not substantial?**

**Yes**, a range of proposed actions was analyzed under the Normal Fire Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation Plan Environmental Assessment (NFESRP EA) for the Boise District BLM. These included ground and aerial seeding, herbicide uses for noxious weed treatments, infrastructure repair, and livestock management actions. An interdisciplinary team review of this fire has determined that the resource values, concerns, and rehabilitation needs are substantially similar to those discussed and approved in the Boise District NFESRP of May 2005 and best meet the vegetative, watershed, and soil objectives of the Bruneau Management Framework Plan.

**2. Is the range of alternatives analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s) appropriate with respect to the new proposed action, given current environmental concerns, interests, resource values, and circumstances?**

Yes, the range of alternatives analyzed in the NFESRP EA is appropriate for this action. Two alternatives to the proposed action were analyzed in the EA (p. 8-30). They included an alternative that would not implement ESR treatments; however, this was eliminated from detailed analysis because it was not consistent with BLM policy and the No Action Alternative, which would continue to use existing 1987/1988 NFESRP's. The overall objective of the EA's Proposed Action is to stabilize and return a burned site to its previous native and/or seeded condition in the shortest time frame to enhance and protect the watershed, soil, wildlife habitat, and livestock forage values of the area. The proposed activities in the Mustang ESR Plan are designed to accomplish that objective for the area burned by the Mustang Fire (G5SF).

**3. Is the existing analysis adequate and are the conclusions adequate in light of any new information or circumstances (e.g., riparian proper functioning condition reports; rangeland health standards assessments; inventory and monitoring data; most recent USFWS lists of threatened, endangered, proposed, and candidate species; most recent BLM lists of sensitive species)? Can you reasonably conclude that all new information and all new circumstances would not substantially change the analysis of the new proposed action?**

Yes, the proposed treatments in the Mustang Fire ESR Plan are within the scope of environmental analysis completed for the Boise District NFESRP and associated Biological Assessment and USFWS concurrence letter.

Based on the new information gained during recent inventory and survey of the burn area, existing analysis from the NFESRP is adequate. The proposed activities included for emergency stabilization and rehabilitation of the Mustang Fire were analyzed in the Plan and not found to be significant.

**4. Are the direct, indirect, and cumulative effects that would result from implementation of the new proposed action similar (both quantitatively and qualitatively) to those analyzed in the existing NEPA document?**

Yes, the analyses of the direct and indirect impacts of the proposed action remain unchanged from those outlined in the existing NEPA document. The impacts outlined in the document directly correlate to those impacts expected from the current proposed actions of aerial seeding, noxious weed treatment, infrastructure repair and construction, and livestock allotment closure. The direct and indirect impact analysis does not analyze the impacts of the fire and the resulting loss of habitat, which is outside the scope of the document. The NFESRP EA analyzes site specific impacts to resources such as vegetation, wildlife, soils,

and sensitive species as a result of the proposed treatments outlined in the ES and BAR plans. All specific design features outlined in the NFESRP will be followed during implementation of the emergency stabilization and rehabilitation treatments.

The cumulative impacts analyzed in the existing NEPA document are adequate with the addition of the proposed action. Special status and non-status plants and animals would be protected by the general and species specific design features, and would benefit from a return to more natural fire cycles and improved ecosystem function including better habitat/population connectivity, migratory corridors, habitat structure, forage and suitability.

**5. Are the public involvement and interagency review associated with existing NEPA document(s) adequate for the current Proposed Action?**

Yes, The public involvement and interagency review of the existing NEPA document is adequate for the current proposed action. The EA states on page 77 that “scoping letters informing the public of the purpose and need for action were sent to 1,077 interested publics including organizations, and federal and state agencies in October, 2003”. The general publics and other agencies included interest from ranchers, academia, conservation groups, Tribal governments, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, and ESA consultation with the USFWS.

**E. Persons/Agencies /BLM Staff Consulted**

**Normal Fire Rehabilitation Plan**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Resource/Agency Represented</b>
Barbara Chaney	Biologist	US Fish and Wildlife Service
County Commissioners	Local Policymakers	Owyhee County
Shoshone Piute Tribes	Wings and Roots	Native American Nation

**Mustang Fire ESR Plan Staff**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Agency Represented/Duty Station</b>
Sarah Heide	Fuels Specialist	BLM – Boise District
Robert Bennett	Operations	BLM – Boise District
Kavi Koleini	Ecologist	BLM – Bruneau Field Office
John Haupt	Rangeland Mgt. Specialist	BLM - Bruneau Field Office
Bruce Schoeberl	Wildlife Biologist	BLM – Bruneau Field Office
Seth Flanigan	NEPA Specialist	BLM – Boise District
Alex Webb	GIS Specialist	BLM – Boise District

Note: Refer to the EA/EIS for a complete list of the team members participating in the preparation of the original environmental analysis or planning documents.

**F. Mitigation Measures:** List any applicable mitigation measures that were identified, analyzed, and approved in relevant LUPs and existing NEPA document(s). List the specific mitigation measures or identify an attachment that includes those specific mitigation measures. Document that these applicable mitigation measures have been incorporated and implemented.

No mitigation measures have been identified.

**G. Conclusion** (*If you found that one or more of these criteria is not met, you will not be able to check this box.*)

Based on the review documented above, I conclude that this proposal conforms to the applicable land use plan and that the NEPA documentation fully covers the proposed action and constitutes BLM's compliance with the requirements of NEPA.

/s/ Sarah C. Heide  
Preparer

9/20/2012  
Date

/s/ Seth Flanigan  
NEPA Specialist

9/21/2012  
Date

/s/ Arnold L. Pike  
Bruneau Field Manager

9/24/2012  
Date

**Note:** The signed Conclusion on this Worksheet is part of an interim step in the BLM's internal decision process and does not constitute an appealable decision. However, the lease, permit, or other authorization based on this DNA is subject to protest or appeal under 43 CFR Part 4 and the program-specific regulations.